



Memorandum
Police Department

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Tom Ryff, Police Chief

DATE: July 8, 2008

SUBJECT: High School Resource Officers

At the July 22, 2008 Issue Review Session I would like to provide an update on the status of School Resource Officers (SROs) assigned to Corona del Sol, Marcos de Niza, McClintock, and Tempe High. As you may be aware, the Tempe Union High School District has historically applied for and received grant funding from the State of Arizona to help fund these positions. Unfortunately, the Tempe Union High School District was recently informed that they were not successful in acquiring grant funds for the upcoming school year. The Junior High Schools (Connolly, McKemy, Gililand, Fees, and Kyrene), however, were successful in getting grant funding.

Representatives from the City Manager's Office and Police Department met with Tempe Union High School District representatives to discuss the status of the grants and the potential impacts on the schools. The result for the Police Department is that without grant resources, we need funding for two SROs at the high schools. In order to ensure that appropriate police services are provided at the high schools, the Police Department has developed the following options for the Council's consideration.

Option 1:

Work with the Tempe Union High School District on their appeal to the State to reconsider funding the Tempe high schools. Given the timelines associated with the appeal and the necessity to have adequate SROs available at the beginning of the school year, non-recurring contingency funds may be used to pay for two positions at the high schools. These funds would be used to hire two contract SROs for the 08/09 school year. This would ensure that each of the four high schools maintained a School Resource Officer on site, and would cost approximately \$165,000. These funds are only being requested on a one time basis as the schools will help support these positions in future years.

It is our understanding from Financial Services that the contingency fund this year is approximately \$1.3 million, which is significantly lower than previous years. If the Tempe Union High School District is successful in their appeal to the State, the contingency fund would be reimbursed.

Option 2:

Each of the two existing SROs could be assigned two schools. This would ensure some level of coverage at each of the high schools; however, the schools would be adversely impacted. SROs would spend less time addressing issues at each school, and their ability to develop strong relationships with school staff and students would be diminished.

Option 3:

Two positions could be pulled from existing staff elsewhere in the Police Department to provide each of the four high schools their own SRO. This would maintain existing coverage at the high schools, but would negatively impact other areas of the Department and the community. With the Council's support, we have been able to address critical staffing shortages in other areas of the Department, so pulling resources from other areas of the Department would impact the workload and service delivery in those areas.

Recommendation:

My staff and I recommend approval for Option 1. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.